

# THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 1898

TO-DAY'S FOOTBALL

GLOUCESTER v. STROUD

THE CITY TEAM AT FROMEHALL

STROUD START WELL – BUT FINISH BADLY

HANDSOME WIN FOR GLOUCESTER

Played at Stroud. The contest created tremendous local excitement, especially in the Stroud Valley, and the prospect of a big gate to the home club was fully realised.

On paper, Gloucester had no reason whatever to fear the result, but in matches where such keen rivalry exists previous performances count for very little. As a corroboration of this fact, one has only to recall the result of the first match between the teams, when Gloucester (who were generally predicted to win comfortably) only just managed to get home – and very lucky they were to do that – by a solitary try. The City players certainly appeared very much off colour that day, but even allowing for this, it was an exceedingly smart performance on the part of Stroud to run their powerful opponents to such a close margin.

Since the previous encounter, both teams had suffered several defeats, Gloucester going under to Swansea, Llwynypia, Cardiff, and Llanelly (all first-class combinations); whilst Stroud had succumbed to Clifton and Bath (twice each), Bristol, Newport A, and Cheltenham College. Last week both clubs were engaged in pretty stiff encounters, but whereas Gloucester proved victorious over Devon Albion, Stroud only succeeded in making a draw with Cheltenham on the latter's ground.

The records of the rival teams up-to-date are interesting : –

		Points.					
		Pld.	Won	Lost	Drn.	For	Agst.
Gloucester	...	23	15	4	4	183	?9
Stroud	...	20	10	8	2	93	76

From these figures it will be observed that Gloucester, though having a far stronger fixture list than Stroud, easily come out on top. For the match to-day, Stroud had their full strength, twelve of the players being on the side which did duty at Kingsholm in October.

The City club, however, were not so fortunate, for besides having Hipwood away (injured in the Devon Albion match), the Brothers Stout were conspicuous by their absence – Frank assisting the South of England; whilst Percy (who was also selected for the big match at Exeter) was laid up with an attack of lumbago.

These defections naturally weakened the visitors a good bit, notwithstanding the fact that the substitutes – G. Romans, F. M. Luce, and W. Hughes – are all smart players.

The weather though inclined to be showery, held up fine, and with such favourable elements visitors turned up strongly, with the evident expectation of witnessing a keen struggle.

Both the G.W.R. and M.R. excursions were largely patronised from Gloucester, and there must have been close on 1,000 supporters of the City club round the enclosure.

The band of the 2nd V.B.G.R., under the direction of Bandmaster Knight and Band-sergeant Lewin, was present and played a lively selection of music prior to the commencement of hostilities.

At 3.40 the players marched from the pavilion, their appearance being the signal for hearty applause.

After the usual preliminaries the men lined up in the following order: –

GLOUCESTER	Positions	STROUD
G. Romans	Backs	H. Poole
G. F. Clutterbuck	Three-quarters	E. P. Apperly
W. H. Taylor (capt.)	"	F. Miller
F. M. Luce	"	D. H. Haines
C. Smith	"	Lewis Smith
A. Stephens	Half-backs	W. Butcher
Car Cummings	"	W. Daniells
C. Williams	Forwards	C. E. Miller
C. Hall	"	P. Smith
C. Rose	"	J. A. Hill
W. Hughes	"	W. Beard
F. Goulding	"	W. Shewell
A. H. Click	"	G. D. Smith
B. L. Watkins	"	J. Snell
G. H. Smith	"	H. Green

Referee : MR. McGAWLEY (Rugby).

### THE GAME

Stroud were successful in the toss, and Butcher elected to defend the Golden Cross end. Hall started for the visitors, Frank Miller (who was playing on the wing opposite Clutterbuck), getting in a capital return. For off-side play, however, the home team were immediately penalised, but after a series of exchange kicks F. Miller found touch in the Gloucester 25. From the line-out Watkins secured, and punted to the centre, where several scrums ensued.

A good kick by Miller put Gloucester on the defensive, and Taylor's return being carried by the wind into touch near the Gloucester line, the City team were sorely pressed. From the throw-out a Gloucester man took a risky punt, which was carried over the line, and Frank Miller rushing up, notched a try in the corner for Stroud within three minutes of the start, amid terrific cheering. The ex-Gloucestrian took the place-kick, but the shot, though well-directed, fell short.

Gloucester dropped out, but the home team, encouraged by their early success, attacked strongly and came very near scoring again.

Gradually Gloucester worked out of danger, and then a smart bit of play by Stephens and Cummings carried operations well inside the Stroud half. Here Watkins was cautioned by the referee for illegally pushing Lewis Smith after the leather had gone into touch.

Gloucester working well together placed their opponents' line in danger. Stephens made one or two attempts to get clear, but Butcher tackled well. At length a pretty movement initiated by the Gloucester halves gave Taylor possession and the City captain putting on his best pace easily rounded Poole and scored behind the posts, at which success the Gloucester crowd cheered loud and long. Clutterbuck took the easy place, but unaccountably failed to cover the cross-bar.

Stroud dropped out, and the home forwards were at once prominent with a good rush, but Romans stopped them nicely. More passing by the Gloucester backs looked promising, but C. Smith, who received from Taylor, could not get clear. Clutterbuck was conspicuous with a couple of fine punts, which gained his side good slices of ground, but the Stroud men recovered by similar tactics.

A free to the home team at length enabled Stroud to reach the Gloucester quarter where play was vigorously contested. Fielding a kick by Luce, Miller got in a good run, but in dodging an opponent he slipped and was easily tackled.

A couple of penalties were awarded to Stroud in quick succession, and by kicks the All Whites were able to keep the game in the Gloucester half. A clever bit of play by Percy Smith gave Stroud a possible opening, but F. Miller was too well watched by Clutterbuck to get far. At this juncture a slight stoppage ensued, whilst Butcher changed his torn jersey.

On resuming a Stroud man shone with a good burst, and the ball getting loose it was picked up and sent quickly out to Lewis Smith, but the pass was adjudged to be forward.

Play continued to go in favour of the All Whites, and Gloucester were forced to concede a minor from a kick over the line by Haines. The drop-out was well replied to by Lewis Smith, who followed up and prevented a return. Butcher here set his backs in motion, but the passing was too slow to allow of any ground being made.

A fine rush by the city forwards, in which George Smith and Goulding were prominent, brought operations to mid-field, where Stephens got away beautifully. Tricking several opponents in clever style the city half-back made a grand opening for Clutterbuck, but the referee blew for a forward transfer.

Gloucester, not to be denied, played up grandly, and Taylor and Clutterbuck gave the home backs some anxiety. Then a superb burst by the Gloucester front rank took the ball to within half a dozen yards of the goal-line, where Poole saved pluckily. A couple of anxious scrums followed in close proximity to the Stroud goal, but Lewis Smith eventually brought relief. Apperly and Butcher by smart dribbles further improved matters for Stroud, and when the interval arrived play was being contested in the centre.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Gloucester ..... 1 try  
Stroud ..... 1 try

George Smith restarted, Hughes returning with a capital punt to Lewis Smith, who was pounced upon by Rose and Hall before he could effect a reply. Gloucester immediately took up the running, and Lewis Smith getting a reply charged down, the City team became very dangerous. A subsequent kick by Stephens sent the ball into touch almost on the Stroud goal-line.

From the throw-out the home forwards relieved slightly, but Cummings picking up in the loose made a lovely opening by feigning to pass. The Gloucester half-back got right through the opposing centres, but the colleague whom he passed to was immediately collared from behind. Still, the effort led to a sharp attack on the Stroud lines, and the home team had plenty to do.

For palpable off-side play by Butcher and Daniells Stroud were penalised in front of their goal. Clutterbuck was deputed to take the kick, and from the favourable position he covered the cross-bar nicely, amidst the exultant cheers of the City Club's supporters.

Stroud resumed, but play was quickly taken to their end. Gloucester looked likely to score again, but Apperly and Cecil Miller in turn brought relief. A bad mistake by Poole gave several forwards a chance of a score, but they did not avail themselves of it. Useful kicks by Haines enabled Stroud to reach their opponents' half, but Romans sent them back with a fine punt for a penalty.

Lewis Smith, with a useful run and kick, was mainly responsible for Stroud getting a bit the best of matters, but Luce, intercepting an opponents' pass, secured a grand opening. On reaching Poole, however, the Old Cheltonian slipped, and though he managed to send the ball to a colleague, what looked almost a certainty for a score, was lost, and it very nearly came off in the next minute. Still attacking, the City team had all the play, and from a mark by Cummings Clutterbuck landed a grand goal from outside the 25 flag.

Stroud re-started, but Gloucester got going again almost immediately. Clutterbuck, taking full advantage of a mistake by Apperly, snapped up the ball, and easily beating Poole ran over with a capital try. The same player, however, failed to convert.

Stroud dropped out, but it was evident the home team had shot their bolt, for Gloucester simply ran over them and in less than a minute the City team were swarming about their opponents' lines.

Out of some loose play the ball got amongst the Gloucester men, and after one or two players had handled "Whacker" Smith went over the line with the third try for Gloucester. Clutterbuck again failed to convert. Gloucester now had the substantial lead of 13 points – a fact which the City Club's supporters did not fail to recognise.

On the drop-out Stroud, urged on by the shouts of their supporters, played up pluckily, and Lewis Smith and Butcher were prominent with smart individual efforts. As a team, however, the home men were fairly and squarely beaten, and any ground they made was quickly recovered by the visitors.

As the result of a clever bit of play by Cummings, Poole was forced to concede another minor, and on the kick out Gloucester continued to have all the game. Goulding several times distinguished himself by bursting away from the scrum, and it was mainly by these efforts that the city team attacked. In the last few minutes the visitors worked with great energy to effect an addition to their score, and right on time Taylor kicked a beautiful goal from a mark.

RESULT :

Gloucester ... 3 goals (2m, 1p), 3 tries (20 points)  
Stroud ..... 1 try (3 points)

REMARKS

The defeat of Stroud by such a decisive margin came as a big surprise to their supporters, as, in fact, to everyone else on the ground. In the first half, Stroud, to give the team due credit, had more of the play than the visitors, though the actual scoring denoted three points each up to that period.

After the change of ends, however, the Gloucester team, with the slope in their favour, simply outplayed their opponents at all points, and it was miraculous how the Stroud lines escaped being crossed more than twice. The three goals (two from marks and one from a penalty) of course helped to swell the City team's scores considerably.

The first shot of Clutterbuck's was from a fairly easy position, but the two others were the result of grand kicks, Taylor's effort at the close being a very fine one. Taking the game all through, it was a very interesting exhibition, and the keenness of the fight kept excitement up to a high pitch.

The try scored by Frank Miller in the first three minutes fairly sent the Stroud supporters into ecstasies of delight, but all the same the points were very luckily obtained. Gloucester did not allow much time to elapse before equalising, and Taylor's try – the result of a brilliant run – ought certainly to have been converted.

As before mentioned, Stroud held the advantage in the initial half, and during this period the All Whites certainly displayed good football, the forwards especially more than holding their own with the Gloucester pack. Afterwards, however, the City front rank turned the tables in pronounced fashion, the whole eight playing with rare dash and resource.

Goulding was, perhaps, the pick of the bunch, the county forward exhibiting fine form throughout the game. In the loose he was always on the ball, and his play in the lines-out was scarcely less praiseworthy. Next to Goulding, Hall, Watkins, Hughes, and Smith were the more noticeable for special efforts, though the others all played a good game. For Stroud Cecil Miller, Hill, and Beard did well, the latter putting in a lot of hard work in the mauls.

Coming to the rival back divisions, Gloucester held a distinct advantage everywhere, both individually and in combination. At half-back, Stephens and Cummings fairly had the measure of the Stroud pair, of whom Butcher did best. The superiority of the Gloucesterians was very pronounced in the matter of making openings, and in this respect both Stephens and Cummings were equally prominent. At three-quarter Gloucester held the whip hand. Taylor, in the centre, got plenty of work to do, and the City captain was in one of his happiest moods. His try has already been alluded to but he did one or two other very smart things in the way of sprinting.

Luce was not unduly prominent, but he did a lot of effective work in a quiet manner. Clutterbuck was the better of the two Gloucester wing men, the Post Office representative displaying great dash and cleverness. Smith showed an improvement on his previous display, and he made no mistake about going for the line when he scored his try.

Frank Miller was the most useful of the Stroud three-quarters, his kicking in the first half being very useful to his side. Lewis Smith did not get many chances on the other wing, and neither Apperly or Haines accomplished anything startling. The passing of the Stroud quartette was very slow as a rule, and more than once the ball was snapped up by a Gloucester man. Romans was far more successful at full-back than Poole.

#### GLOUCESTER A v. STROUD A

This return match followed immediately after the Cup-tie at Kingsholm. Stroud arrived with three men short. Stroud kicked off, and immediately were forced to touch down, and only knocking-on on several occasions kept Gloucester from getting through. However, after many feeble attempts the ball got out from Hall to Cook, and from the latter to Weaver, who scored in the corner. Griffiths' kick failed.

The Stroud captain had to leave the ground on account of an injury to his mouth, and this left Stroud with eleven men, but Gloucester played such a shocking game they could not do anything. Weaver, however, received nicely from a kick and scored again. This was the first bit of play worth seeing since the match commenced. Goddard failed at the kick.

Weaver ran through nearly the whole team and passed to Hough, who after a dodgy run scored the third try right behind the posts. Cook goaled.

After some good passing by Hall and Cook, James scored again behind the posts, and Goddard goaled.

Hall lost a certain try by not passing. Weaver scored again from a pass by Cook, and Goddard failed at the kick.

James next scored in the corner but Cooks' [passage incomplete].

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Gloucester A ..... 2 goals, 4 tries (22 points)

Stroud A ..... Nil

In the second half Weaver, using his pace, scored after Hall and Cook had handled. Cook failed at the kick.

From a line-out Lewis scored, no goal resulting.

Stroud then got over the half-way line for the first time in this half, but Gloucester still further added to their score by the aid of Goddard, Payne goaling; and Cook, who dodged through the whole team, Payne failing miserably at the goal.

Gloucester still went on scoring, more tries being added by Hough, which was improved upon, and by Hall after a splendid run, for which no kick was allowed because Goddard the would-be kicker touched the ball after "no charge" had been called.

Three tries were added by Lewis, which Cook goaled, and by Hough, which was improved upon.

RESULT :

Gloucester A .... 6 goals, 8 tries (54 points)

Stroud A ..... Nil